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PERFECT. ALMOST PERFECT.

WRITTEN BY

SUZAN LORI PARKS

DIRECTED BY: TEODORA DJURIC

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Surface Collective is thrilled to present Suzan-Lori Parks' *365 Days/365 Plays* from **April 23-25, 2026**, at the **Helen Gardiner Phelan Playhouse**.

In 2002, Suzan-Lori Parks wrote one play a day for a year, creating a series of short, non-linear, and unrelated plays responding to her reality as a Black woman living in America. There is an aliveness to Parks' text, this mosaic of ideas which responded daily to the world around her. Parks weaves between the philosophically complex and the gentle mundane. She invites artists to select 27 plays in addition to three undated plays called the Constants for a presentation of a total of 30 plays. These constants act as guideposts for all 365 plays, honing in on three essential themes of Parks' writing. Aria and Teodora have taken plays written in 2002/2003, and rooted them in 2026 through a full year of dramaturgy. Our selection is going to explore: grief as movement, bad systems, and divinity as sound.

Playwright: Suzan-Lori Parks

Performers:

Alexandra Martin - Daughter
Perna Nehta - Arjuna
Ermina Pérez - Kingdom
Parker Elizabeth Rodenburg - Heir
Matt Scerri - Krishna
Ben Steele Caldwell - Jones

Creative Team:

Teodora Djuric - Director, Sound Designer, Co-Producer
Aria Sharma - Dramaturg and Co-Producer
Nicole Eun-Ju Bell - Lighting and Projection Design
Lindsey Griffith - Props and Costume Designer
Evan Moritz - Props and Costume Designer
Bronwyn Keough - Stage Manager
Samara Tower - Assistant Stage Manager
Elise Tigges - Co-Producer
Ben Steele Caldwell, Parker Elizabeth Rodenburg &
Perna Nehta - Fight Captains
Djanet Sears - Moderator
Rodrigo Becerra Patiño - Cover Design

Centre for Drama, Theatre, and Performance Studies:

Kathleen Gallagher - CDTPS Director
Seika Boye - Associate Director, Undergraduate
Jill Carter - Associate Director, Graduate
Ariel Martin Smith - Manager, Theatre Operations
Adrien Whan - Technical Director
Tara Maher - Communications and Events Officer

"365 Days/365 Plays (One-Act)" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc.



This production is in partnership with the Centre for Drama, Theatre & Performance Studies at the University of Toronto as the 2026 CDTPS Alumni Performance Project-- a non-student opportunity which provides the venue, some rehearsal space, and technical elements as in-kind donations. We are also supported by EJ3Arts - a new Toronto based theatre production company who has provided us with seed funding for this project. The contributions of CDTPS and EJ3Arts have made this production possible, and we extend enthusiastic thanks.

About Surface Collective

Committed to intersectionality, critical multiculturalism, and sociopolitically conscious work, Surface Collective takes a collaborative, experimental approach to theatre. Writer Toni Cade Bambara said, "As a cultural worker who belongs to an oppressed people my job is to make revolution irresistible." We believe our role as artists is to do the same. We see the horror and the beauty, the injustices and the hope, the dissonance and the harmony.

There are countless people and organizations doing important social justice work. Some organizations that we would like to highlight include: PYMToronto, Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) Toronto, SPRING Mag Toronto, Grassy Narrows, Toronto Food Not Bombs, and Harm Reduction Coalition.

About The Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies

The Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies was born of a merger between the former Graduate Centre for Study of Drama and the University College Drama Program on the St. George University of Toronto campus. The department maintains a relationship with the undergraduate drama programs at the University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM) and the University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC). The department offers broad, rich, and rigorous academic programs for undergraduate and graduate students.

About EJ3Arts

EJ3Arts is a multidisciplinary theatre production company dedicated to creating bold, driven theatre and performance experiences, while nurturing the next generation of creative leaders. We provide emerging choreographers, directors, and designers with professional opportunities to develop and showcase their work – serving as a launchpad for artists to bring their visions to life. EJ3Arts fosters collaboration, experimentation, and a reimagining of what performance can be.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Either become part of the wheel, or be crushed by it.

Turns out, progress isn't a straight line. Nor is it a back-and-forth motion. Someone told me it's a spiral-- and I do find myself walking past the same place again and again just three inches to the left, three years older, three moments changed. I think it's this tidal process of revisiting that led me to develop a collaging hobby in the past few years. I used to exhaust myself journaling-- the specificity, semantics, unpacking and naming events or emotions. But collaging offers a different archival approach. It emphasizes associations, and allows our opinion of the recorded moment to change and grow. When I let go of the sense of control that language gave me, I accepted the individual and collective experiences that shape each person's reality. I can't tell you how to feel about the systems that surround us, but I can place two things together that might make you consider both a little more closely. I can't tell you what it's like to be me, but you might know what it feels like to sit in the plastic chair I put onstage.

In a 2024 interview, Parks describes how her plays emerge from images, symbols, and sentences, instead of a concrete 'idea' to prove. Uncertainty is a masterful tool in unlocking creative thinking. These plays unsettled me, pulled me in close, and whispered something I recognized. Her writing challenges you to engage dialectically, and to lean into impossibility or contradiction, which is especially useful when engaging in themes of systemic harm, framed by my context of my family coming to Canada as refugees from the Yugoslavian Civil war.

Either become part of the wheel, or be crushed by it. What if we hung on the side, weighting it just so, so the next bump in the road broke the spokes? I believe we can get there. Everything counts. We will march in these streets, and one day, we will dance in them. You have to be there to dance too. In the meantime, cling to the things you care about, and the caring itself.

Thank you to!

Jordan Robertson-Reid and EJ3Arts for their gracious support. And to Dylan Trowbridge, Krista Jackson, Temesghen Naizghi, Rodrigo Becerra Patiño, and Lizzy Parenteau.

To my cast and crew for all your bravery and work. To Aria, for walking through this storm with me.

To my family and my friends. You are all the loves of my life. I'm so glad we exist at the same time.

Teodora Djuric

(for the full text of my Director's Note, see our Show Zine *Behold, Bitch!*, which was, curiously, cut out and collaged by the Swordsmen)

DRAMATURG'S NOTES

365 Plays/365 Days is a mammoth creation by the prolific Suzan-Lori Parks. On November 13, 2002, Parks endeavoured to write one play a day and that formed the current text we have today. *365 Plays/365 Days* is ambitious in its scope but also in Parks' bravery to commit to such a process which required her to keep her eyes open and mind active every day. As a black woman in America, Parks, I imagine does not have the privilege to look away. Many of us would prefer to turn our heads. *365 Days/365 Plays* asks us to keep watching together. The 'together' part I believe is of great importance.

There is an aliveness to the text – this mosaic of ideas – which stems from the fact that they were written in direct response to life that day. Parks is at times incredibly complex and philosophical, at other times she lauds the simple and mundane, and more often than not both are true. She invites artists to play around and choose whatever plays we want to bring to life and in whatever order. Yet she stands firm in her artistry by insisting everyone include three play pillars; the 3 constants. As such, I feel Parks' hand reaching out of her words in invitation to other artists, to us. How exciting! How scary! Oh, the possibilities!

In an interview at Yale in 2006, Suzan-Lori Parks says this about the plays in *365 Days/365 Plays*:

"these plays, while they are snapshot plays, they are very small, short little plays, they are [also] mythic plays. They are operas. They are huge and yet tiny at the same time. They're these mythic characters, dealing with these mythic issues."

Tiny yet mythic indeed. Within these 'snapshot plays', Parks writes of war, community, love, racism, hope, capitalism, comradeship, and anxiety in the face of it all. This feels incredibly pertinent to our time and place as young people within a Canadian but ultimately diasporic, global context. These plays are therefore incredibly dense and it became important for Teodora and I to take our time doing dramaturgical work on this. Time to carefully find our 30 play selection to hoist from the page and onto the stage. We did not intend for this to happen but we took a complete year to finish our dramaturgical work. It took us 365 days to discover, absorb, and feel confident to launch into production of *365 Days/365 Plays*. Isn't that just kismet.

So yes, this is not a 'well made' play. There is no one, clean narrative. You have been warned! Parks' plays provoke rather than provide clear messages. In fact, some feel like riddles. We invite you into Parks' vast universe. We ask you to lean in, allow the plays to prod at you, and get ready for those delicious riddles. We are curious as to what you decode.

Aria Sharma

CAST



Alexandra Martin (any/all) is a 24-year-old, Jamaican-Canadian, queer theatre artist based in Toronto. Alexandra was featured in the hit new Canadian musical *Killy Willy* (First Born Theatre) which premiered at Toronto Fringe Festival in 2025 and was remounted at Second City a few months later. Alexandra is also currently working as a background singer for the music artist EBG while he performs around Toronto. *365 Days/365 Plays* will be Alexandra's first non-musical stage show. Alexandra is excited to be expanding their horizons and working with such a talented group of creatives and performers



Perna Nehta (she/they) is a Toronto & Montréal based actor and creative whose passion and work currently lie in wonder, connection and queerness. A 2024 graduate of Concordia University's Acting for the Theatre program, her performance creation centers around uncovering the many-hued truths existing across all aspects of life. Driven and dedicated to crafting art with intention, their practice is endlessly inspired by the intimacy, beauty, difficulty, and fantasy that lives in the everyday, hoping to bring candour and comfort to those who come across her work. Selected credits include *Heera in Trident Moon* (Crow's Theatre/National Arts Centre, 2025, dir. Nina Lee Aquino), *Patti in Caravan* (Tableau D'Hôte Theatre, 2024, dir. Liz Valdez), Rachel Corrie in *My Name Is Rachel Corrie* (Teesri Duniya Theatre, 2023, dir. Abi Sanie) and Antigone in *Antigonick* (Concordia University, 2021, dir. Jessica Carmichael).



Ermina Pérez (she/her) studied at The Stella Adler Studio of Acting in New York City and The Surprise with The Storm Theatre Company. Touring hospitals, mental health units and shelters in Toronto/GTA with Shakespeare-in-Hospitals, Ermina performed devised works of Shakespeare with the extraordinary Spur-of-the-Moment Shakespeare Collective. Theatrical credits include The Teatron Jewish Theatre's productions of Arthur Miller's *Broken Glass*, as well as *The Story of Ethel & Julius Rosenberg*, *Dark Tales*, *Fahrenheit 451*, and *Night Mother*. Ermina is thrilled for the opportunity to endeavour together with an exceptional group of artists that might not have come together if it weren't for the incomparable and fiercely palpable work of Suzan-Lori Parks' *365 Days/365 Plays*.



Parker Elizabeth Rodenburg (she/they) is an actor and playwright based in Tkaronto. A graduate from the University of Windsor's 2022 BFA in Acting program, they have since continued training with theatres like Tarragon, Buddies in Bad Times, and Shakespeare Bash'd. She is passionate about telling often untold stories in a way that celebrates artists and their identities and gives people the opportunity to explore wonderful and exciting as well as difficult narratives.



Ben Steele Caldwell (he/him) is an actor, writer, producer and graduate of Sheridan College and University of Toronto's Theatre and Drama Studies program. The past year he has been building a film distribution company dedicated to creating positive social change, New Mountain Films. Selected Film & TV Credits: *Ginny and Georgia*, *13: The Musical* (Netflix), *Dream Scenario* (A24), *Murdoch Mysteries* (CBC), *Doc* (FOX). Ben is excited to be working with Sunface Collective.



Matt Scerri (he/him) is an actor from Toronto, ON. Matt has trained with Second City, The William Esper & HB Studio, NYC – Matt has performed across Toronto with Alumnae Theatre, Crows Theatre, and Helen Gardiner P. Playhouse, as well as multiple short films that have premiered across festivals in Toronto, Vancouver, and Italy. Matt has recently finished a run for the 2025 Toronto Fringe Theatre Festival, where his performance in *Silence*, garnered reviews from multiple platforms, most notably, Toronto Star. Matt currently trains with UK actor, Bobby Schofield, at the Zope Actors Studio. Matt is happy to be returning to the Helen G. Phelan Playhouse for the production of *365 Days/365 Plays*. Matt would also like to thank his many heroes in performance, who inspires his work to continue pursuing the truth.



CREATIVE TEAM



Nicole Eun-Ju Bell (she/her) is a Toronto based, Korean-Canadian, multidisciplinary artist with a passion for performance and technology. Among other things, she is a projection and lighting designer, XR artist, and production manager. Her designs have been presented by various Toronto-based theatre companies and toured across North America. Some of the festivals that have featured her work (both theatre and XR) include: Prague Quadrennial 2019 and 2023, Summerworks 2022, Luminato 2022, and the Venice Biennale. Nicole is an alumnus of the CDTPS, and is filled with nostalgia being back at the playhouse.



Teodora Djuric (she/her) is a second generation Serbian-Canadian theatre artist based in Toronto who also writes music under the alias INAT, and animates the occasional puppet. Her and Aria co-founded Sunface Collective with the aim of producing exciting and challenging work. She has a background in classical and physical theatre, and informs her work with a crossover of her education in both Theatre, and Psychology from the University of Toronto. She is currently creating and scoring a series of masked characters who explore how certain non-normative ways-of-being create dissonance in oppressive social systems.



Lindsey Griffith (she/her) is a Toronto-based writer and artist. As a performer, she creates surreal, self-aware, and stubbornly lo-fi worlds that often veer into the metatheatrical. As a designer, she loves nothing more than building a set out of hot glue and garbage. Her recent set and puppet design for *My Pet Lizard, Liz* at Toronto Fringe was praised as "the kind of artistry I love seeing at the Fringe." The production was awarded Best of Fringe and Greenest of Fringe 2025. lindsey.zone | [@lindseyolo](https://twitter.com/lindseyolo)



Bronwyn Keough (they/she) has been an artist/weirdo/freak for as long as anyone can remember. Born and raised in Ktaqmuk/Newfoundland, they studied at the University of Toronto and Sheridan College. They are an actor, playwright, director, and producer, and are thrilled to be stage managing *365 Days/365 Plays*. In 2017, they co-founded No Vowels, a St. John's-based comedy collective still active today. Bronwyn loves swimming, singing out loud in public, and poetry (cliche!!!). Bronwyn is fascinated by horror comedy, our social relationship to collective memory, and the politics of girlhood.



Evan Moritz (he/him) is a designer-director and a PhD candidate at the University of Toronto's Center for Drama, Theatre, and Performance Studies. His research focuses on performance practices around Resolute Bay, Nunavut, and he explores the outer limits of science-fiction and fact in his performance practices.



Aria Sharma (she/her) is a hobbit-sized person who believes herself a wizard. She's an island gyal from Trinidad but her craft has taken her to Canada and beyond. She holds an undergraduate degree in acting from the joint program of University of Toronto Mississauga and Sheridan College (this collaboration has recently faded into legend but I swear it existed) as well as a Master's degree in Theatre from UofT. Her theatrical practice is expansive and includes acting, directing, dramaturgy, playwriting, puppetry, stage management, sound design, and arts administration.



Elise Tigges (she/her) is a dance artist, educator, and administrator based in Toronto. Originally from Vancouver, BC, she is a graduate of the George Brown Dance Performance program. Elise has performed at New Blue Emerging Dance through the Creative Crunch project, with the Garage TO dance collective, REAson d'être dance, and Ballet Jörgen. Elise is the co-founder of the arts collective, Lofty Goal Project. She has extensive arts education and administration experience, developing and delivering programming across Canada, and has had her writing published in The Dance Current. Elise is currently completing an undergraduate degree at the University of Toronto. Her research interests center intergenerationality and memory.



Samara Tower (she/her) is a theatre technician, designer, and artist from the GTA. She is a recent graduate of the University of Toronto's Masters of History program where she focused on Toronto's theatre and labour histories. Samara is thrilled to return to the world of stage management for *365 Days/365 Plays*.

ABOUT SUZAN-LORI PARKS

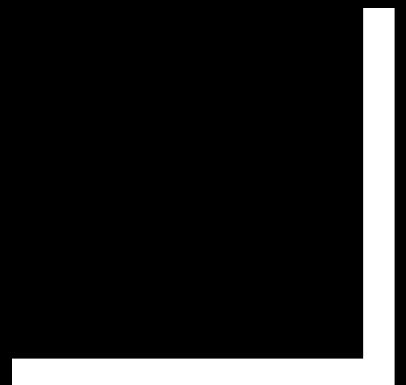
Named one of Time magazine's "100 Innovators for the Next New Wave," in 2002 Suzan-Lori Parks became the first African American woman to receive the Pulitzer Prize in Drama for her Broadway hit *Topdog/Underdog*.



A MacArthur "Genius" Award recipient, she has also been awarded grants by the National Endowment for the Arts, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the New York State Council on the Arts and the New York Foundation for the Arts. She was most recently awarded the Dorothy and Lillian Gish Prize for 2015. Her new play *Father Comes Home From The Wars* (Parts 1, 2, & 3) made its world premiere at the Public Theater in New York, followed by a celebrated run at the A.R.T in Cambridge, MA. The play was named a finalist for the 2015 Pulitzer Prize for Drama and was awarded the 2015 Edward M. Kennedy Prize for Drama Inspired by American History, as well as the 2014 Horton Foote Prize. Parks's work on *The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess* was honored with a 2012 Tony Award.

Her numerous plays include *The Book of Grace*, *In The Blood* (2000 Pulitzer Prize finalist), *Venus* (1996 Obie Award), *365 Days/365 Plays* and *The Death of the Last Black Man in the Whole Entire World*, among others. She's written a novel, *Getting Mother's Body*, published by Random House. Her first feature-length screenplay was *Girl 6*, written for Spike Lee. She's also written screenplays for Brad Pitt, Denzel Washington, Jodie Foster and Oprah Winfrey, adapting Zora Neale Hurston's classic novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, which premiered on ABC's *Oprah Winfrey Presents*.

Parks is currently writing an adaptation of the film *The Harder They Come* for a live stage musical. Suzan-Lori is the Master Writer Chair at the Public Theater, and she also serves as a professor in dramatic writing at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts.



Surface Collective produced a zine, designed by Lizzy Parenteau, that includes additional details on the making of the production, much like an extended program. Zine's are available for purchase for \$10 in the lobby. We are accepting payment via cash or e-transfer.

The sound design you heard today – that was created by Director, Sound Designer, and Co-Producer Teodora Djuric. The album is available to listen [here](#).

Like many small theatre companies, we are able to make a project like this possible through donations. We have a GoFundMe campaign running until the show closes. If you have the means or would like to make a donation, you can do so [here](#). All donations support the project, cast, and creative team.

THANK YOU

There are many people and organizations who were instrumental in making this project possible:

Inès Alibay, Rodrigo Becerra Patiño, Kael Bury, Catherine Gava, Caleb Klager, Lilly Logue, Vandana Maharaj, Michelle Mohammed, Emma Moore, Saskia Muller, Lizzy Parenteau, Shadi Sadat, Aideen Teeling, Anita Yung

B Street Collaborative, Native Earth Performing Arts, The Theatre Centre, Woodbine Heights Baptist Church

All of our community donors and community members who supported us through GoFundMe donations, engagement with our fundraising event, sharing our activities far and wide, and showing up to be part of our audiences. This production has been made possible with your contributions!

Thank you!



Centre for Drama, Theatre & Performance Studies
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



**Native
Earth**
Performing Arts



WOODBINE HEIGHTS
BAPTIST CHURCH

**THE
THEATRE
CENTRE**